



EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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news digest

96-1653D

Disagreements fail to mar warmth of meeting between pope and archbishop of Canterbury

(ENS) When Archbishop of Canterbury George L. Carey traveled to Rome to meet with Pope John Paul II in early December, the visit highlighted the gulf that still lies between the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, but also underscored a mutual commitment to seek bridges.

After two days of talks, neither Carey nor the pope would claim that significant progress had been made on the issues that divide the churches, chief among them being the ordination of women. Still, the meeting itself offered impetus to continuing dialogue.

"I'm a realist, and the realistic part of my response is to recognize that there are still deep divisions," Carey said at a press conference. But, he added, "This meeting certainly strengthened that feeling that we have traveled a long way together, and in spite of recent difficulties that both of us have spoken about, the commitment to go on fills me with hope."

Observers of the meeting have stressed "the warmth of the personal connection" between Carey and the pope, even while there was "frankness of exchange," said Prof. William Franklin, professor of modern Anglican studies at the General Theological Seminary in New York. In the welcome extended by the Vatican especially, "the symbols were of wanting to maintain a warm relationship while recognizing that we've reached an impasse in the dialogue," he said.

96-1654D

Diocesan investigation continues into Long Island scandal

(ENS) An investigation into allegations that Brazilian men were sexually exploited by a group of Long Island clergy will continue for several weeks, according to the president of the standing committee of the Diocese of Long Island.

The Rev. Richard Brewer said December 17 that interviews with those involved in, or

with any knowledge of, the alleged events could conclude by the end of January. "But it's difficult to say because as the interviews progress we find there are others we should speak with," he said.

The diocesan investigation follows an article in the December *Penthouse* magazine describing alleged homosexual orgies in St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church in Brooklyn, New York, involving clergy and several Brazilian men. A "wedding" between then-rector Lloyd Andries and one of the Brazilians was also depicted.

The interviews are being conducted by James F. O'Rourke of the New York law firm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher and Flom, and Bishop O'Kelley Whitaker, whom Bishop Orris Walker of Long Island has named to participate in the independent investigation.

Walker, meanwhile, left the diocese in November to begin a rehabilitation program for alcohol abuse. There is no definite word as to when he will return, although he has not delegated his diocesan responsibilities to another bishop.

96-1655D

Churches support ad calling on Israelis and Palestinians to share Jerusalem

(ENS) Christian congregations across the country shared in a Christmas prayer for "the peace of Jerusalem," Sunday, December 22, in conjunction with the appearance in the *New York Times* of a full-page advertisement calling for Jerusalem to be shared by Israelis and Palestinians.

Under the banner "Christians call for a shared Jerusalem," the ad supports "a negotiated solution for Jerusalem that respects the human and political rights of both Palestinians and Israelis," as well as the rights of Jews, Christians and Muslims.

"Jerusalem at peace cannot belong exclusively to one people, one country or one religion," the ad states. "Jerusalem should be open to all, shared by all . . . two peoples and three religions."

Sponsored by the ecumenical organization, Churches for Middle East Peace, the December 21 ad was purchased through contributions from more than 600 individuals, congregations and Christian organizations. Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning of the Episcopal Church was one of 17 church leaders whose names lead off the list of supporters.

In an editorial submitted to the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*, among other newspapers, Browning noted that "as Christians everywhere turn their attention to the event which occurred 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem, our attention must be drawn to what is occurring today in the very same location."

96-1656D

Episcopal Migration Ministries earns top rating from federal agency

(ENS) The federal Bureau of Refugees, Migration and Population has designated Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM), the refugee and immigration service arm of the Episcopal Church, as the top resettlement agency in the United States.

The bureau, a branch of the U.S. State Department, is the lead federal agency for determining annual refugee admissions into the country, and the principal source of funding for initial resettlement services. Episcopal Migration Ministries is one of 10 national agencies with agreements with the bureau to resettle refugees.

The Episcopal agency received high marks on all fronts, and earned commendable or top ratings for the bureau's on-site visits to three affiliates in New Hampshire, New York, and East Tennessee, Parkins said. In particular, EMM was credited with placing nearly 93 percent of its "unattached" refugees in jobs within their first six months in the U.S.

"We believe (the Episcopal Church) is an excellent agency," said Anita Botti, director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement at the State Department. "Their performance in finding people employment and trying to get them employment is extraordinary."

Because of the high performance rating this year, EMM should receive a greater percentage of the refugee cases admitted to the country in 1997, Botti said. Currently, the agency, which has a staff of eight and a budget of almost \$3 million, mostly from federal funds, settles about 2,000 refugees each year through 34 diocesan programs.

96-1657D

Anniversary of World War II prompts apology by Japanese church

(ENS) Fifty years after the close of World War II, a statement by the General Synod of the Nippon Sei Ko Kai (the Anglican Church in Japan) admits the church's "responsibility and confesses its sin" for supporting Japan's "war of aggression," and the country's colonial rule over its neighbors.

Instead of being able to "stand beside those who are oppressed and suffering," the church made compromises with the militarism that drove the war effort, the statement acknowledges.

Last year, in the same vein, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning joined in a corporate apology to Japan by signing a statement expressing "profound sorrow to the Japanese people" for "the suffering and death left in the wake of the destruction" of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

by atomic bombs.

"On behalf of those peace-loving people of our country who grieve over the decision of our government to drop the bombs and the unimaginable pain inflicted upon the families and survivors of the doomed cities, we extend a heartfelt apology," said Browning and the other signers of the statement sponsored by the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

"I think the two statements represent an incredible witness towards healing and reconciliation," said the Rev. Canon Brian Grieves, the Episcopal Church's peace and justice ministries officer. "I hope the whole church will be moved by the courage of these acts so that we can all participate in the process of healing."

96-1653

Disagreements fail to mar warmth of meeting between pope and archbishop of Canterbury

by James H. Thrall

(ENS) When Archbishop of Canterbury George L. Carey traveled to Rome to meet with Pope John Paul II in early December, the visit highlighted the gulf that still lies between the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, but also underscored a mutual commitment to seek bridges.

After two days of talks, neither Carey nor the pope would claim that significant progress had been made on the issues that divide the churches, chief among them being the ordination of women. Still, the meeting itself offered impetus to continuing dialogue.

"I'm a realist, and the realistic part of my response is to recognize that there are still deep divisions," Carey said at a press conference. But, he added, "This meeting certainly strengthened that feeling that we have traveled a long way together, and in spite of recent difficulties that both of us have spoken about, the commitment to go on fills me with hope."

Observers of the meeting have stressed "the warmth of the personal connection" between Carey and the pope, even while there was "frankness of exchange," said Prof. William Franklin, professor of modern Anglican studies at the General Theological Seminary in New York. In the welcome extended by the Vatican especially, "the symbols were of wanting to maintain a warm relationship while recognizing that we've reached an impasse in the dialogue," he said.

Bishop Frank Griswold of Chicago, co-chair of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of the United States, agreed. "Ultimately, communion is people in relationship with one other," he said.

From the initial invitation from the pope to the minute protocols of the meetings, "all the signs made it clear to Vatican observers that the visit was taken very seriously," Griswold said. He called the visit a boost for the American discussions because it helped answer the question, "Is the Vatican genuinely interested in Anglican-Roman Catholic relations?"

Willing to keep talking

Carey, his wife, Eileen, and Archbishop Njongonkulu Winston Ndungane of Cape Town, were invited for an unscheduled, private lunch with the pope, and Carey's party was given use of a Vatican limousine. Also, Griswold noted, the two were photographed sitting side by side in identical chairs. "Those who watch Rome with care know that that signifies a parity, the heads of two churches meeting each other as equals," he said.

On the Anglican side, the delegation that accompanied Carey was perhaps the highest ranking of any Anglican visitation to the Vatican, Franklin said. Carey also stressed his

commitment to continuing to support the Anglican Centre in Rome, established to nurture Anglican and Roman Catholic relations.

"The human contact was deeper than ever before," Franklin said. While neither church leader indicated a willingness to abandon his church's current positions, clearly "no one wants to slide back into an antagonistic posture."

While "there were rumors of some more positive theological breakthrough that did not emerge," there were also "rumors that there would be a setback," Franklin said. "That also did not happen."

Following the visit, a new steering group of Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops to oversee further efforts at unity was announced. The second Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC II) also will continue to exist, even after producing what was to have been its final report on the exercise of authority in the two churches next year.

The new steering group's membership will be considered in the next round of informal talks between the two churches in January, according to the *Church Times* newspaper of London. Bishop John Hind, Anglican bishop of Gibraltar in Europe, called the new commission "a missing ingredient, namely a body to exercise some kind of oversight of our relations as a whole."

Meeting produces joint declaration

A joint statement or "Common Declaration" issued by the two church leaders at the conclusion of the December 3-5 meeting was, for an ecclesiastical document, almost blunt in laying out at least one of the hurdles separating the two churches.

"The obstacle to reconciliation caused by the ordination of women as priests and bishops in some provinces of the Anglican Communion has also become increasingly evident, creating a new situation," according to the statement. The obstacle is significant enough, the statement continues, to suggest that it is time to "consult further about how the relationship between the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church is to progress."

Even so, the statement called for continued efforts to "deepen our theological dialogue, not only over issues connected with our present difficulties, but also in all areas where full agreement has still to be reached."

The joint declaration suggested that unity might be built on the foundations of joint mission work by Anglicans and Roman Catholics. "Whenever they are able to give united witness to the Gospel they must do so, for our divisions obscure the Gospel message of reconciliation and hope," the declaration stated.

The year 2000 may also offer a particular opportunity to "proclaim our common faith in God" as Anglicans and Roman Catholics jointly celebrate 2,000 years "since the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," the statement added. But even in expressing that hope, the two church leaders noted, "We make this call in a spirit of humility, recognizing that credible witness will only be fully given when Anglicans and Catholics . . . have achieved that full, visible unity that corresponds to Christ's prayer 'that they may all be one . . . so

that the world may believe."

A symbolic service

Carey and the pope signed the declaration on Carey's last evening in Rome after sharing in a Vespers service at the Church of San Gregorio al Celio (Saint Gregory's Church), where Pope Gregory the Great commissioned Saint Augustine to bring Latin Christianity to Britain.

In their homilies at the service, however, neither church leader shied away from restating the positions that pose problems.

"Sadly, we are faced with disagreements, which have arisen since we entered into dialogue, including disagreement about conferring priestly ordination on women," the pope said. "This question puts into clear relief the need to reach an understanding of how the church authoritatively discerns the teaching and practice which constitute the apostolic faith entrusted to us."

"We in the Anglican Church cannot hide the fact that we developed out of the Reformation," Carey said in turn, noting that "it is tempting, especially in Rome, to feel particularly burdened by this historical rift in the body of Christ." Carey went on, however, to call the Reformation "not a tragedy so much as a rediscovery: a rediscovery of the Bible and its authority; a rediscovery of the importance of justification by faith; a rediscovery of the local church; a rediscovery of the servanthood of ministry and priesthood."

Recalling an earlier visit

In their greetings to each other at the beginning of the visit, both church leaders referred to the meeting 30 years ago of Pope Paul VI and Archbishop of Canterbury Michael Ramsey following the Second Vatican Council.

"That first official visit to the Holy See by an archbishop of Canterbury since before the tragic separation of the 16th century was to have great significance for relations between the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church," the pope said. "It signaled to Catholics and Anglicans that they should, in Christian charity, put conflict behind them and work to reestablish unity."

With the work that began at that time through the first ARCIC, "some of the fruits hoped for have begun to appear," the pope said, referring to a "rediscovery of the degree of real though imperfect communion which exists between Anglicans and Catholics."

Carey noted that he still wears the Episcopal ring that Pope Paul gave to Ramsey, and called it "an important and treasured reminder of the common commitment of the See of Rome and the See of Canterbury to the cause of Christian unity."

Carey is the fifth archbishop of Canterbury to visit the Holy See. The trip marked the second time that he and the pope had met.

Carey's visit included three sessions with the pope, as well as meetings with Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, president of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith. Carey preached an Advent sermon at Evensong at Saint Paul's Episcopal Church, and gave a lecture on ecumenical work in a pluralistic world sponsored by the Anglican Centre in Rome at the Centro Pro Unione, a Roman Catholic ecumenical center.

In addition to his wife and Archbishop Ndungane, Carey was accompanied by the Rev. Canon John L. Peterson, secretary general of the Anglican Communion; Bishop Mark Santer of Birmingham, Anglican chair of ARCIC; Bishop John Hind; Bishop Jeffery Rowthorn of the Convocation of American Churches in Europe; the Rev. Richard Marsh, secretary for ecumenical affairs; Lesley Perry, press officer; and James Rosenthal, director of communication for the Anglican Communion.

--James H. Thrall is deputy director of news and information for the Episcopal Church. This article is based on reports from Religion News Service, Ecumenical News International, Anglican Communion News Service, and the Church Times newspaper.

96-1654

Diocesan investigation continues into Long Island scandal

by Jerry Hames

(ENS) An investigation into allegations that Brazilian men were sexually exploited by a group of Long Island clergy will continue for several weeks, according to the president of the standing committee of the Diocese of Long Island.

The Rev. Richard Brewer said December 17 that interviews with those involved in, or with any knowledge of, the alleged events could conclude by the end of January. "But it's difficult to say because as the interviews progress we find there are others we should speak with," he said.

The diocesan investigation follows an article in the December *Penthouse* magazine describing alleged homosexual orgies in St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church in Brooklyn, New York, involving clergy and several Brazilian men. A "wedding" between then-rector Lloyd Andries and one of the Brazilians was also depicted.

The interviews are being conducted by James F. O'Rorke of the New York law firm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher and Flom, and Bishop O'Kelley Whitaker, whom Bishop

Orris Walker of Long Island has named to participate in the independent investigation.

Brewer said Whitaker, retired bishop of the Diocese of Central New York, will be involved in preparing a report to the standing committee and diocese after the interviews are completed.

Bishop seeks alcohol treatment

Walker, meanwhile, left the diocese in November to begin a rehabilitation program for alcohol abuse. There is no definite word as to when he will return, although he has not delegated his diocesan responsibilities to another bishop.

The consecration of the diocese's new suffragan bishop, the Rev. Canon Rodney Michel, likely will be held in April if the necessary consents are received from diocesan standing committees. Brewer said that despite the difficulties in the diocese, there has been no delay in preparing and mailing information to the standing committees.

Edgar "Kim" Byham, Andries' legal counsel at the inquiry, said another lawyer will file a libel suit against *Penthouse* on Andries' behalf. Andries said Walker forced him to resign as rector of St. Gabriel's and to renounce his orders after the article, which featured photos of the naked priest with a Brazilian man, were published in the sexually explicit magazine.

In the article, Walker acknowledged hearing rumors about the same-sex blessing but said he did not see a need to investigate.

Parishioners part with priest

At a reconciliation service at St. Gabriel's on December 7, parishioners expressed their appreciation for Andries' 17 years of service. "It was recognized that the rector had provided leadership in assisting the parish to grow dramatically in size and commitment as a faith community," according to a report published in the diocesan paper.

Clergy, health-service chaplains, clinicians, social workers and a psychologist have met with parishioners as they talked about how they had been affected by the Brazilians' charges and the subsequent media reports.

Walker appointed the Rev. Blair Martin Hatt, his deputy for diocesan pastoral care, to oversee the parish until an interim pastor is named. Bishop James Ottley, Anglican observer to the United Nations, continues as bishop-in-residence.

--Jerry Hames is editor of *Episcopal Life*, the national newspaper of the Episcopal Church.

96-1655

Churches support ad calling on Israelis and Palestinians to share Jerusalem

by James H. Thrall

(ENS) Christian congregations across the country shared in a Christmas prayer for "the peace of Jerusalem," Sunday, December 22, in conjunction with the appearance in the *New York Times* of a full-page advertisement calling for Jerusalem to be shared by Israelis and Palestinians.

Under the banner "Christians call for a shared Jerusalem," the ad supports "a negotiated solution for Jerusalem that respects the human and political rights of both Palestinians and Israelis," as well as the rights of Jews, Christians and Muslims.

"Jerusalem at peace cannot belong exclusively to one people, one country or one religion," the ad states. "Jerusalem should be open to all, shared by all . . . two peoples and three religions."

Sponsored by the ecumenical organization, Churches for Middle East Peace, the December 21 ad was purchased through contributions from more than 600 individuals, congregations and Christian organizations. Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning of the Episcopal Church was one of 17 church leaders whose names lead off the list of supporters.

Supporters also sent letters to newspaper editors condemning the expansion of Jewish settlements on occupied Palestinian land within the boundaries of Jerusalem, and noting that there is an increasing voting block of church members who are "intensely interested in promoting a shared Jerusalem . . . and fiercely impatient with the lack of progress toward peace in the Middle East."

Browning editorial urges shared city

In an editorial submitted to the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*, among other newspapers, Browning noted that "as Christians everywhere turn their attention to the event which occurred 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem, our attention must be drawn to what is occurring today in the very same location."

Too little attention has been given, he warned, "to an explosion-in-the-making that combines the combustible issues of settlement building and Jerusalem."

Particularly now that the presidential election in the United States has concluded, "bringing the concept of a shared Jerusalem into the public policy debate in the United States is indeed cause for hope," Browning said. "It's about time."

He urged "international policy shapers" to "recognize the opportunity to forge a foreign relations legacy for the President of the United States and guide him toward reconciliation and hope for Jerusalem."

While "our stakes in this conflict may seem distant in terms of miles, we are bound

firmly by heritage and faith-based principles of justice and peacemaking to continue to broker a negotiated settlement that can bring peace on earth and goodwill toward all people," he concluded.

--James H. Thrall is deputy director of news and information for the Episcopal Church.

96-1656

Episcopal Migration Ministries earns top rating from federal agency

by James H. Thrall and Ed Stannard

(ENS) The federal Bureau of Refugees, Migration and Population has designated Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM), the refugee and immigration service arm of the Episcopal Church, as the top resettlement agency in the United States.

The bureau, a branch of the U.S. State Department, is the lead federal agency for determining annual refugee admissions into the country, and the principal source of funding for initial resettlement services. Episcopal Migration Ministries is one of 10 national agencies with agreements with the bureau to resettle refugees.

"I knew that we had been consistently improving. We had been working quite hard," said Richard Parkins, director of EMM. "I knew we would do better, but I guess moving into first place was a little more than I had hoped for."

Parkins said that in his two years as director the program has emphasized careful screening of placement sites as well as in-depth monitoring of sites after refugees are placed.

"We look at performance, how well the refugees are being taken care of," he said. "It's a two- to three-day exercise. We've worked to develop a protocol that is fairly exhaustive."

Parkins also praised the more than 30 local resettlement agencies associated with dioceses and affiliated with the national program. "We have a great network." On the local level, resettlement cases are also supported by "considerable parish and diocesan resources" though sponsoring congregations, he said.

Criteria stress services, job placement

Criteria used by the State Department for evaluating the programs included the quality of the services provided by each program's affiliates, the national management of the program, employment outcomes for those refugees resettled without the support of immediate

family members, and the level of repayment of loans made to refugees for their transportation to the United States.

The Episcopal agency received high marks on all fronts, and earned commendable or top ratings for the bureau's on-site visits to three affiliates in New Hampshire, New York, and East Tennessee, Parkins said. In particular, EMM was credited with placing nearly 93 percent of its "unattached" refugees in jobs within their first six months in the U.S.

"We believe (the Episcopal Church) is an excellent agency," said Anita Botti, director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement at the State Department. "Their performance in finding people employment and trying to get them employment is extraordinary."

In addition to an outstanding record placing unattached refugees in jobs, EMM was among the best agencies in overall job placement, with a success rate of 62 percent. "That's incredible," Botti said. "This is the whole caseload."

Botti called EMM's rating a tribute to its totally church-based program, which, she said, demonstrates that "the participation and exposure through the church in integrating (refugees) into the United States is critical."

Because of the high performance rating this year, EMM should receive a greater percentage of the refugee cases admitted to the country in 1997, Botti said. Currently, the agency, which has a staff of eight and a budget of almost \$3 million, mostly from federal funds, settles about 2,000 refugees each year through 34 diocesan programs.

--James H. Thrall is deputy director of news and information for the Episcopal Church. Ed Stannard is news editor for Episcopal Life, the national newspaper of the Episcopal Church.

96-1657

Anniversary of World War II prompts apology by Japanese church

by James H. Thrall

(ENS) Fifty years after the close of World War II, a statement by the General Synod of the Nippon Sei Ko Kai (the Anglican Church in Japan) admits the church's "responsibility and confesses its sin" for supporting Japan's "war of aggression," and the country's colonial rule over its neighbors.

Instead of being able to "stand beside those who are oppressed and suffering," the church made compromises with the militarism" that drove the war effort, the statement acknowledges. "The Nippon Sei Ko Kai confesses to God and apologizes to the people in

Asia and the Pacific that we did not admit our fault immediately after the end of the war, were unaware of our responsibility for the past 50 years, and have not actively called for reconciliation and compensation until today."

Last year, in the same vein, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning shared in a corporate apology to Japan by signing a statement expressing "profound sorrow to the Japanese people" for "the suffering and death left in the wake of the destruction" of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by atomic bombs.

"On behalf of those peace-loving people of our country who grieve over the decision of our government to drop the bombs and the unimaginable pain inflicted upon the families and survivors of the doomed cities, we extend a heartfelt apology," said Browning and the other signers of the statement sponsored by the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

"I think the two statements represent an incredible witness towards healing and reconciliation," said the Rev. Canon Brian Grieves, the Episcopal Church's peace and justice ministries officer. "I hope the whole church will be moved by the courage of these acts so that we can all participate in the process of healing."

Apologies communicated

The General Synod's statement was adopted in May, and Primate James Takashi Yashiro of Japan sent a copy of it to Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning this fall, requesting that it be distributed throughout the Episcopal Church.

Referring to the length of time since the war, Yashiro said, "While it may seem to have taken a long time for this statement of apology to appear, it has finally come to the surface after much prayer, reflection, discussion, and heart-felt concern. We offer it as a sign of our love to all those who suffered and were oppressed."

In addition to confessing the church's war responsibility and apologizing to the churches in the countries that Japan invaded, the statement indicates that Nippon Sei Ko Kai will "start and continue a program in each diocese and parish, to review the historical facts and to deepen our understanding of the Gospel."

The statement on Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the Fellowship of Reconciliation underscores that "this apology does not ignore the atrocities committed by Japanese forces in their march across Asia, not does it forget the suffering and death of those in the occupied countries, among the Allies, and those in the armed forces." Still, the statement stressed, "We reject mass killing and obliteration bombing as acceptable policies, then or now."

The signers added, "We feel it necessary to acknowledge and atone for the decision of our nation to introduce the use of atomic weapons and for the subsequent nuclear arms race which still hangs over the head of civilization."

--James H. Thrall is deputy director of news and information for the Episcopal Church.



news briefs

96-1658

Diocese of Hawaii sues former chancellor over retirement home project

(ENS) The diocesan council of the Episcopal Diocese of Hawaii has voted to file suit against the diocese's former chancellor and his former law firm over a failed retirement home project that left the diocese burdened with a \$4 million loan debt. Michael Porter, formerly of the law firm of Cades, Shutte, Fleming and Wright, served as the diocese's chancellor and also represented Episcopal Homes of Hawaii, a non-profit organization established in 1989 to develop the \$150 million "lifetime care" retirement complex in Waialae-Kahala, a section of Honolulu. A statement from the council in the October issue of the diocesan paper notes that "the decision to file suit (against Porter) is taken with heavy heart by many," but was regarded as necessary in order to meet the "fiduciary responsibility of the council." Earlier this year, the diocese decided not to pursue a suit against its former bishop, Bishop Donald P. Hart, and the Hart's former executive officer, the Rev. Peter Van Horne. Hart resigned following the project's collapse. The council's statement also notes that the action against Porter "should not be construed as a total solution to the debt owed to First Hawaiian Bank and expenses incurred as a result of the loan guarantee." Paying off the remaining debt "will require all in the diocese and our friends to seek creative solutions," according to the statement.

Church-run schools tried to 'kill the Indian in the child'

(ENT) A six-volume, 4,000-page report, issued after a five-year government investigation into the treatment of Canada's indigenous peoples has called for churches who ran Indian residential schools and for the federal government which oversaw the schools' administration to apologize officially to indigenous people whose lives were severely damaged by abuse and by the government policy of killing "the Indian in the child." The call for the apology is one of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, authors of the recently released report. The government of the time was bent on what it called "elevating" and "civilizing" the indigenous population, the report said, calling for community compensation to help the healing process, and funds to assist in the treatment of families affected. Another major recommendation in the report is a proposal for Parliament--and Queen Elizabeth--to issue a new "royal proclamation" acknowledging past

mistakes and committing governments to a new relationship, including the creation of an aboriginal parliament, to be known as the "House of First Peoples," to legislate on all matters relating to native peoples. Canada's Indian Affairs Minister, Ron Irwin, dismissed the commission's ambitious proposals as "unrealistic." He said that "if you come at it and say: 'If you put all these billions in, things will be better, we'll all get to heaven'--it doesn't work." Matthew Coon-Come, leader of the Quebec Cree people, said of the government's reaction to the report: "I am very disappointed so far." Speaking on a Baton Broadcasting television news program, Coon-Come described Irwin and Prime Minister Jean Chretien as "very arrogant," and called the problems facing indigenous people a "social time bomb."

Marriage licenses for all--or none, says Rhode Island priest

(ENS) A Rhode Island priest has announced that she will not sign marriage licenses for heterosexual couples until the licenses--with the legal rights they confer-- are issued for homosexual couples as well. The Rev. Jan Nunley, rector of the Church of Saint Peter and Saint Andrew in Providence, said that while she will continue to bless the marriages of mixed-gender couples and the unions of same-gender couples, she will not perform the civil function of signing marriage licenses for the state. "As a priest of Christ's church, I will not act as a legal representative of government in perpetuating policies that are discriminatory, immoral and unjust," she said in a letter to her vestry explaining her decision. The passage by Congress of the Defense of Marriage Act, which limits legal marriage to male-female couples, galvanized her, she said, to act on a long-standing concern about the civil role thrust upon her as a member of the clergy. Since her role as a priest in officiating at a marriage is to bless the vows that the man and woman have made to each other, "I don't create anything. I simply bless what God and the couple have done," she said. "Signing a marriage license is a very different matter; it asks me to create something that's never been there before, in a sphere to which I don't feel called--the civil law." Mixed gender couples who want to be married at her parish may have another clergy person sign the certificate, or have a brief civil ceremony before the wedding. "I don't desire to withhold God's blessing from any sincere couple ready to undertake vowed life together," she said.

Four-year study finds New Age 'Religion of Me' is no path to God

(ENI) "The Search for Faith and the Witness of the Church," a recent report by an English ecumenical group claims that fashionable New Age practices like aromatherapy and meditating on pyramids are not a true path to God but merely ends in themselves, directed only at making the individual feel good. Anglican Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali, chairman of the Mission Theological Advisory Group (MTAG), said that some theologians had gone beyond a "sense of wonder" and venerated the natural world for its own sake. "We wanted to affirm aspects of creation spirituality, while not turning creation into God," he said. While expressing some understanding of people's desire to try new forms of belief, the report made it clear the advisory group believes that "pick and mix" spirituality is not the way. It adds

that while fascination with divination through stars, crystals or the Tarot is a modern expression of one of humanity's oldest impulses, what is lacking now is "the sense that we are moving into God's future." The report is the result of a four-year study by MTAG, which is responsible to the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland (CCBI) and to the Church of England's General Synod. Nazir-Ali said that levels of belief remained high, but there was a drift away from Christian orthodoxy. "The further from belonging [to a church] a person moves, the more eclectic beliefs become," he said.

Financial crisis forces Canadian council to cut and restructure

(ENI) The United Church of Canada (UCC), one of the main financial supporters of the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), recently reduced its contribution to the council for 1997 by \$34,000, precipitating a financial crisis for the organisation already suffering from declining support from its member churches. The CCC announced in November that an expected shortfall was forcing downsizing and restructuring, a process that has been going on for three years. According to Bob Mills, the CCC's interim general secretary, support from the member churches has levelled off during recent years, while costs have continued to rise. (The CCC has for several years dipped into reserves to meet budget commitments.) Mills said, "If we continue, the reserves would disappear. It would mean the end of the council in 1998. We have no other sources of income except member churches." At a recent meeting, the CCC's governing board took steps to reduce the number of staff and to reorganize its work. "Downsizing will enable us to meet our budget," Mills said. Guidelines were approved by the board to help the council "function as a forum as it moves into the 21st century."

Catholic reformers plan key protest for October 1997

(ENI) "We are Church" (WAC), a gathering of reform-minded Catholics from Europe and North America, recently announced that on October 11, 1998, a "meeting of God's people" will be organized in Rome to coincide with the 35th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council. According to organizers, petitions addressed to Pope John Paul II calling for reform and signed by Roman Catholics in Europe and North and South America will be presented to the Vatican on that date. A recent WAC meeting in Rome said that some of the promises made "to God's people" at the Second Vatican Council "have not yet been kept." WAC was first launched in Austria, with an "appeal from God's people" for the creation of structures allowing dialogue at all levels of the Roman Catholic Church, complete equality between men and women in all the church's ministries, optional celibacy for the clergy, freedom of conscience for married couples in matters of birth control, respect for homosexuals and divorcees who have remarried, and a greater commitment to justice and peace. By June 1995, the Austrian "appeal" had collected more than half a million signatures. By November 1995, 1.8 million people in Germany had signed a similar appeal. The initiative then spread, with local variations, to other European countries and to the United States and Canada, where petitions are still being collected.

Radical changes proposed to World Council of Churches

(ENI) The World Council of Churches is considering radical changes in its structure, including the creation of a new ecumenical forum which could include the Roman Catholic Church and other churches which are not members of the WCC. The proposed changes seem likely to reduce the size of the WCC's organizational structure, resulting in a less costly and more flexible organisation. The proposals, outlined in a recent paper sent to the WCC's 330 member churches, will be discussed next September at the WCC's central committee in Geneva. Final proposals will be presented to the next WCC assembly, in 1998 in Harare, Zimbabwe. The paper suggests that in the year 2000, all Christian churches should--in a "common act"--commit themselves to working "towards the day when an ecumenical council of the entire Church of Jesus Christ, in the sense of the ancient undivided church, will take place." The paper, a draft policy statement entitled "Towards a Common Understanding and Vision [CUV] of the World Council of Churches," is part of a process that has been under way since 1989, but which has taken on an added urgency because of a severe financial crisis facing the WCC. Although the draft paper avoids making proposals for "the internal arrangement of ongoing council operations and staff deployment"--which it says are "beyond the scope of this document"--an internal WCC staff group is working on proposals to reshape WCC staffing in line with the CUV proposals.

Regional church conference to be held in Cuba

(ENI) The next general assembly of the Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC) to take place in Cuba, July 19-24, 1997, will be a sign of solidarity with the Cuban churches, CCC general secretary Monrelle Williams said recently. According to observers, Cuba's churches have been growing rapidly since 1990 when the country's leader, Fidel Castro, pledged to end discrimination against Christians. This growth has also coincided with a deepening economic crisis in Cuba since the collapse of the Soviet Union, which provided substantial economic aid to the island. At the same time the churches have begun to take over some social tasks previously carried out by the government. Williams, who recently visited Cuba as part of the preparations for the CCC assembly, said that the assembly's theme, "We Celebrate a new Vision, new Hope and new Life," was intended to provide direction for the organization for the 21st century. The CCC, which was founded in 1973, now has 24 member churches with congregations on 32 islands in the Caribbean region. CCC membership includes several Roman Catholic bishops' conferences from the region, but not the Cuban bishops' conference--a fact that has made the preparations for the assembly particularly sensitive. Following an historic meeting between Pope John Paul II and Cuban president Fidel Castro, it was announced that the pope would visit Cuba before the end of 1997. "The invitation has been accepted because the two conditions imposed by the Vatican have been met, namely that the pope may go where he chooses and say whatever he likes," said Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls.



news features

96-1659

World Council of Churches mission meeting struggles with mix of gospel and culture

by James H. Thrall

(ENS) The Gospel of Jesus Christ must both challenge a culture and be "illuminated by it," delegates to a 10-day international gathering on mission and evangelism concluded.

The 600 representatives of nearly 120 member churches of the World Council of Churches (WCC) met in Salvador, Brazil, November 24 through December 3 for the 11th Conference on World Mission and Evangelism. The first conference, held in Edinburgh in 1910, is generally considered to have been the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement.

Under the theme of "Called to One Hope--the Gospel in Diverse Cultures," the conference delegates struggled with questions of "what we meant by the Gospel, what we meant by culture, how secularism in our culture or nativism in other cultures affects our understanding of the Gospel," said Margaret Larom, the Episcopal Church's world mission interpretation and networks officer, and one of two representatives from the Episcopal Church.

She returned from the meeting, she said, pleased with the opportunity to "talk to people whose context was so different from mine, but who had so much love and commitment and willingness to wrestle with some of the issues."

Elizabeth Mellen, an Episcopalian who is the associate director of the Graymoor Ecumenical Institute in New York, called the conference, held every eight to 10 years, part of the gift of the ecumenical movement. "It is in the intentional coming together, the naming of who and what we are so that we may truly encounter one another, that we are able to move forward in dialogue, in action, in Christ," she said in an interview.

Finding a balance

In a final message adopted by the conference, the delegates stressed that "the church must hold on to two realities: its distinctiveness from, and its commitment to, the culture in

which it is set." With such an approach, "the Gospel neither becomes captive to a culture not becomes alienated from it, but each challenges and illuminates the other."

While the message also described the delegates as having "hearts on fire with the beat of mission and a prayer on our lips that many will share with us in being 'Called in One Hope,'" the conference acknowledged the shortcomings of past missionary efforts.

Continued racism in the church, the slavery of African peoples and "near extermination" of indigenous communities and cultures were cited. Churches of North America and Europe were chided for the paternalism of much of their missionary efforts, and North American churches were cautioned against a "growing localism," which, "while strengthening their commitment to mission and evangelism in their own context, may lead to an isolation and insulation from global realities."

Still, the delegates applauded Bishop Lesslie Newbigin, retired missionary and bishop of the Church of South India, who proclaimed that "the gospel is certainly the most important fact in the world, and one which we cannot keep to ourselves."

Their final message reasserted a belief that the church's primary calling is to "pursue the mission of God in God's world through the grace and goodness of Jesus Christ," but also stressed that "this mission, history-long, world-wide, cannot be seen today in narrow ways--it must be an every-member mission, from everywhere to everywhere, involving every aspect of life in a rapidly changing world of many cultures now interacting and overlapping."

Conference includes tensions, disappointments

Larom said that she and other delegates were disappointed that the conference did not provide more opportunities for interaction with the local Afro-Brazilian community, even though representatives of "candomble," an Afro-Brazilian religion, were allowed to address the gathering.

Tensions also were evident, she said, as concerns of the Russian Orthodox Church over proselytism clashed with perceptions of other denominations that they were mandated by their faith to share in spreading the Gospel in Russia. "It wasn't all sweetness and light," Larom said. "There were some very hard times."

The Episcopal representation, which also included Keith Yamamoto, a senior at the General Theological Seminary in New York, was able to offer the perspective of a worldwide and profoundly diverse Anglican Communion, she said. "Because of the breadth of the Communion, I think our experience made us very sensitive to the ecumenical mission," she said.

Worship services showed a particular genius for incorporating diverse traditions and liturgical practices in such a way that "touches people but doesn't offend," Larom said. "Some focused on the way Jesus handled cross-cultural encounters. Others focused on contemporary issues such as AIDS. Each had a message."

In a particularly moving service, delegates gathered at Solar do Unhyao, the site of the dock where African slaves landed (see related story). A brick from the outer wall of the

now-destroyed slave fort, Cape Coast Castle, in Ghana, where the slaves were loaded on ships, was presented to the Afro-Brazilian community.

New statement on mission prepared

The WCC also held a hearing to gather input for a new statement on mission and evangelism that will be presented to the WCC Central Committee in September, 1997, and to the Eighth Assembly of the WCC in Harare, Zimbabwe, in September, 1998. The new statement, which is expected to take up important developments in mission thinking since 1982, should supplement the landmark document, "Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation," adopted by the Central Committee in 1982.

--James H. Thrall is deputy director of news and information. This article is based on a news release written by John Newbury of the World Council of Churches.

96-1660

Service at World Council of Churches meeting recalls brutal history of slavery

by Margaret Larom

(ENS) With a rough, worn stone and a bowl of fresh water, two Africans from Ghana offered a gift of new life to Christians representing churches around the world in a moving liturgy in Brazil.

The early morning liturgy was a transforming moment in the 10-day Conference on World Mission and Evangelism sponsored by the World Council of Churches, November 24 to December 3. The service took place at *Solar do Unhao* (mansion of a slave trader) in Salvador, Bahia, by the old harbor where the first enslaved Africans disembarked in 1550.

Designed as a time for repentance and reconciliation, the event began with a guided meditation resembling the Stations of the Cross:

"Walk to the end of the dock and look to the sea ... where for over 300 years, somewhere between six and 12 million people were transported by slave trader ships from Africa to the Americas."

"Walk to the shed where it is believed that people were classified ... Walk to the front of the church. Here water was thrown on the slaves and words were said over

them. This increased their value."

Standing on the stone-paved ground, feeling the sharpness through their shoes, the gathered Christians also seemed to feel the pain of the millions of men, women, children--shackled, stumbling, afraid--who passed through the harbor over more than 300 years of slave trading. A prayer of confession and a litany followed the singing of the spiritual, "Deep River."

Sharing the guilt

"We have heard words of repentance. But those who brought us here were not alone in the making of this tragedy," said Dr. Aaron Tolen of the Cameroon Presbyterian Church, one of the WCC presidents. "We Africans share in the responsibility. We have degraded ourselves by selling our brothers and sisters as goods. It is because we have never had the courage to recognize it and to repent that we continue to do the same today, hence the disgraceful situation of Africa. We want to repent and ask for forgiveness and God's mercy."

With that, the Rev. Dr. Janice Nessibou of Ghana and Elizabeth Mulbah, an Anglican who runs the Christian Health Association of Liberia, presented the "stone of tears"--a worn brick from the outer wall of the slave fort at Cape Coast Castle in Ghana where the slaves were loaded on ships--to a representative of the Afro-Brazilian community in Salvador. "This represents 358 years of degradation. Let it be a reminder that we will never do this to ourselves again," Nessibou said.

A gift not made lightly

The decision to offer the gift was not made lightly. One participant said he originally was opposed to the whole idea of the service: "So everyone repents, and goes home feeling better. What does that accomplish?"

One young African American said he "had problems" with the victimization aspect; others said that the whites (Europeans and Americans, both North and South), should have been up there too.

But in the end the decision was made to go ahead, and the result was a gripping encounter with the Holy Spirit. As one observer noted, the gift of the Africans, in carrying that stone from Ghana, was in symbolically helping to bear the burden of guilt, by acknowledging complicity in an ancient oppressive system.

The Rev. Simea de Souza Meldrum, an Episcopal priest widely known for her work with people living off the garbage dump in Recife, Brazil, was overcome. "What happens in Salvador, in Bahia, affects all of Brazil," she explained, because it is the heart of Afro-Brazilian culture. "You can't imagine the effect this will have--that the churches held such a service here."

The cleansing touch of water

As the service continued, the Rev. Joseph A. Kwame Labi, a Greek Orthodox priest from Ghana, scooped fresh water from an earthenware bowl and offered it up. His voice breaking, he led another litany. "Clean the stains left by our own wrong doing ... wash away the blood stains of those who died unjustly ... give us a fresh start to build a new community."

One by one, weeping, the participants came forward to wash their faces as a sign of healing, reconciliation, and hope. More music followed and more prayers, and the tying of Brazilian ribbons of friendship, and then the sound of drums.

"What sound is this?" the celebrant asked. "What strength is this? What resistance, which overcomes years of oppression? This is the sound of a culture that refused to die. It is the strength which comes from a dynamic people. It is the resistance of those building a new community."

The drums grew louder, more rhythmic, fun, but surging with power and triumph and joy. The sound was *Olodum*, the drum corps of former Salvadoran street children and youths. Watching them perform, with such panache--tough, strong, amused, absolutely connected to each other and to their young leader--the worshipers could only exult in a God who sees people through. They followed the drummers out of the slave dock, and back up the stony road.

--Margaret Larom is world mission interpretation and networks officer for the Episcopal Church.

96-1661

Presiding Bishop's Fund responds to the ongoing Rwanda refugee crisis

by Katerina Whitley

(ENS) As part of its ongoing support for the refugee crisis in Rwanda and neighboring countries, the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief has joined other relief agencies in raising funds to address the most recent exodus of refugees.

An uprising of rebels in Zaire led to a mass exodus of hundreds of thousands of displaced Rwandans attempting to return to their homes in Rwanda, which many found occupied or destroyed. The movement rapidly spread to include refugees in Tanzania and within Rwanda as well.

The fund has continued to receive monies designated for this latest disaster, and before Thanksgiving joined with Church World Service, Lutheran World Relief, United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to seek further assistance by sponsoring a full-page ad in USA Today that appealed for \$7.9 million in emergency funds. The agencies are all members of Action by Churches Together (ACT).

"Obviously the needs are enormous," said Nancy Marvel, the fund's director. "We hope that our generous tradition of giving as Episcopalians will continue."

A history of support

Throughout the 1990s, the fund has sent help to the Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire dioceses as civil unrest evolved into one of the bloodiest civil wars of recent time. The bloodshed has caused loss of homes and jobs, and brought about wide-spread hunger and disease. The local bishops have sent periodic requests for assistance, and the fund has responded with both emergency and regular grants, Marvel said.

Since 1994, the fund has raised nearly \$1 million for the dispersed Rwandans and for those who have returned to their homes and their farms. The money has been distributed to all the dioceses affected by the huge influx of Rwandan refugees.

The Rt. Rev. David Birney, archbishop of Canterbury's special emissary to Rwanda, said that a fact-finding church team to Rwanda concluded that there are more than 5,000 elderly who have either been abandoned or who have no family left to care for them. "We must go about relieving the suffering of the very old, reaching out to all of God's children," Birney urged, and has requested that mattresses and sheeting be provided for these abandoned Rwandans, returnees or simply people left alone within Rwanda.

"Just to supply the mattresses and sheets for the aged, infirm and abandoned people, we would need \$125,000," said Marvel, noting that that only begins to address the needs of the region.

The Barakahabo Foundation, one of the agencies serving the section of central Africa that encompasses the countries of Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire, is caring for thousands of children left orphan by the civil war, but needs schooling supplies, fees, an ambulance, medicines and a truck.

The fund has donated \$25,000 needed for the ambulance, but "if the ambulance is provided by another organization, the \$25,000 will be available for the needed medicines," Marvel said.

To participate in the relief of the enormous suffering of the people of Rwanda and the Great Lakes region, please make your checks payable to The Presiding Bishop's Fund, mark for Rwanda and mail to The Presiding Bishop's Fund, c/o Banker's Trust, P.O. Box 12043, Newark, NJ 07101.

--Katerina Whitley is public relations associate for the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief.



reviews and resources

96-1662

University of the South offers summer advanced degree program

(ENS) The University of the South is seeking applicants for its Doctor of Ministry summer program. The program is designed so that clergy can participate without a major interruption in their parish responsibilities. It stresses the relationship between the practice of ministry, and biblical, historical and theological knowledge. The program consists of 30 semester hours and usually takes three to four summers to complete. Students are required to complete a major project, which is a study of some dimension of one's ministry or the ministry of the church. Courses offered this summer in the advanced degrees program will be "Ministry Seminar" by Dr. Donald Armentrout; "Gospel of Luke" by Dr. Reginald Fuller; "The Church Year and the Daily Office" by Dr. Marion Hatchett; and "Readings in Spiritual Theology I: Sub-Apostolic to the Reformation" by Dr. Robert Hughes. The dates for the Advanced Degree summer courses of 1997 are June 25 - July 30. For more information, write the director's office, advanced degrees program, School of Theology, 335 Tennessee Avenue, Sewanee, TN 37383-0001

Churches urged to join in upcoming Souper Bowl

(ENS) The "Souper Bowl," an interdenominational effort to collect money for contributions to local ministries, is seeking interested congregations. Youth from each church use large soup pots to collect donations as parishioners leave worship the morning of the game. Each congregation selects and sends their contribution directly to the ministry of their choice. According to the organization, the partnership has grown from 22 congregations the first year to nearly 4,600 congregations in 1996. Worshippers from 49 states gave over \$1,300,000 this past year and over \$2,000,000 has been generated since the "Souper Bowl" began. Recipients have ranged from soup kitchens and food banks to international missions and Habitat for Humanity affiliates. The effort began in the Senior High Youth Fellowship of Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in South Carolina in 1990. For more information, call 1-800-358-SOUP, or write to the Spring Valley Presbyterian Church, 125 Sparkleberry Lane, Columbia, South Carolina 29223, (803) 788-3589.

Photographs available in this issue of ENS:

1. Archbishop of Canterbury visits pope (96-1653)*
2. Joint declaration by pope and archbishop of Canterbury (96-1653)*
3. WCC delegates recall legacy of slavery (96-1660)*
4. Passing a 'stone of tears' (96-1660)*
5. Presiding Bishop's Fund assists Rwandan refugees returning home (96-1661)
6. Presiding Bishop's Fund assists with Rwanda relief (96-1661)*

* This photo is available in color.

Tentative mailing dates for future ENS releases are January 16 and February 6.

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